

# Foster Parents

Changing Lives One Child at a Time

January 2006



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For information about Foster Parenting: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>

For information about Foster Parent Training: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>

**Thank you for all you did for the children and families of Washington State in 2005.**

## 2006 Annual Caregiver Conference

As you know planning is underway for the 2006 Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference. Subcommittees have been identified and volunteers are needed to participate. The Subcommittees are: Volunteer Coordination, Workshops, Fund Raising, Entertainment, Regional Meetings, Food, Vendors and Keynote. If you would like to participate or know someone who would like to participate in any of the subcommittees listed below, please contact Barb Bofinger at (360) 902-7986 or [boba300@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:boba300@dshs.wa.gov).

## Community Aid Coalition Gives to Foster Families

The Community Aid Coalition at the Monroe Correctional Complex provides support to the community. Prisoners who work in the coalition support 40 different organizations, including foster care. They work with Families For Kids, which provides support for foster families through a contract with the state.

From their sewing rooms within the complex, the prisoners make quilts – up to 1,200 a year – for the organizations supported by the coalition, including foster families. Hundreds of quilts have been distributed the past several years to foster families through the program.

“The amount of work these guys have done in the past couple years for our organization has been incredible,” said Nancy Underwood-Long, who coordinates Families for Kids support activities in the northwestern part of the state. “Always ready to make a special quilt for a raffle or a child, always ready to start work for another child welfare organization that I tell them about, always willing to help.”

“They say they want to change their way of thinking and this is their way of compensating for their past lives,” said Bryan Bechler, who oversees the program in his job as Recreation Director/Community Involvement Specialist at the complex.

In an Everett Herald story in April, prisoner James Blair, serving time for forgery, put it this way: “Making stuff for kids gives back to the people I screwed up.”

Anyone who would like more information about the quilts can reach Underwood-Long at 1-888-794-1794 or [nunderwood@lcsnw.org](mailto:nunderwood@lcsnw.org).

## Changes in Child Care and Respite Payments

Children’s Administration is changing the way we pay for childcare and respite provided in the home of children receiving services from the DSHS Children’s Administration. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is requiring us to give the payment directly to the individual providing the child care or respite service. This change begins with payments after January 1, 2006.

All parents, foster parents, relative caregivers and the individual providers currently involved with child care and or respite care provided in the home received a letter informing them of this change. About 300 children are currently authorized to receive this service.

Licensed child care centers and licensed childcare homes will not be affected by this change. If you have any questions about this change, please call the social worker assigned to the child in your care.

## Confidentiality of Foster Parent Information

Children’s Administration does not release your name or address to the Foster Parent Association of Washington State (FPWS), local foster parent associations, YMCA of Greater Seattle or to Families for Kids (FFK). These agencies can provide support, information and referral, and key information to assist you in providing for the children in your care. We encourage you to contact each of these agencies and provide them with your information so that they can add you to their email and mailing list and you can then receive important information. To contact FPAWS, FFK, Resource Family Network (Region 5) or the YMCA of Greater Seattle see the information listed below for their phone numbers and website addresses.

## Foster Parent Association of Washington State

The Foster Parent Association of Washington State (FPAWS) is seeking new members.

FPAWS has been in existence for more than two decades and provides information and advocacy on behalf of foster parents. The FPAWS website [www.fpaws.org](http://www.fpaws.org) includes information useful to foster parents, including trainings, training locations and times, local foster parent associations, and a support line for foster parents 1-800-391-CARE (2273).

## Resources for Foster Families

FAMILIES FOR KIDS (FFK) has a state contract to provide support services for foster parents in all counties (not including Pierce and Kitsap counties). You can contact them at 1-888-794-1794 or [www.familiesforkids.org](http://www.familiesforkids.org). To help you in the work you do, you are encouraged to join a hub, buddy system or support group run by Families for Kids.

YMCA OF GREATER SEATTLE: The YMCA of Greater Seattle is the statewide recruitment contractor for all counties (not including Pierce and Kitsap counties). You can contact them at 1-800-760-5340 or [whyfoster@seattleyymca.org](mailto:whyfoster@seattleyymca.org).

FOSTER CARE RESOURCE NETWORK: The Foster Care Resource Network is the recruitment and retention contractor for Pierce and Kitsap counties. You can contact them at 1-253-677-8122.

FOSTER PARENT TRAINING: All licensed family foster homes (including private agency, Children's Administration and licensed relative homes) are required to complete 36 hours of ongoing training during each three year licensing period. There are great trainings available to help you in the work you do. To find out what trainings are available go to the foster parent website at <http://www1.dsha.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>.

## Important Numbers

**Important numbers to know when you take care of children in foster care or are thinking about doing so:**

Statewide information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent: *Why Foster* statewide telephone line at 1-800-760-5340 or [whyfoster@seattleyymca.org](mailto:whyfoster@seattleyymca.org). Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

Statewide information about receiving foster parent support: *Families for Kids*: 1-888-794-1784 or [www.familiesforkids.org](http://www.familiesforkids.org). Monday- Friday, 9:00 – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message. Receive a return call by the next business day.

Kitsap and Pierce County information about becoming a foster parent or to receive foster parent support: *Foster Care Resource Network*, 1-253-677-8122. Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call by the next business day.

General foster parent information for the state of Washington/FPAWS: *Foster Parent Association of Washington State*, 1-800-391-CARE (2273) or [www.fpaws.org](http://www.fpaws.org). Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call by the next business day. Seeking new members and supporting foster parents in many ways, including referrals to local associations.

Support for foster parents under investigation for allegations of abuse or neglect: *Foster Parent Investigation Retention Support Team (FIRST)* 1-253-219-6782. Monday – Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

CA Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis Line and general support on licensing and case management questions not abuse or neglect: *Caregiver Support/Crisis Line* 1-800-301-1868. Weeknights from 4:30 p.m. – 8:00 a.m., weekends and holidays, 24 hours per day.

*Family Help Line*: 1-800-932-HOPE or [www.parenttrust.org](http://www.parenttrust.org). The Family Help Line is a free, statewide training and referral line for the families of Washington State. Last year, the Family Help Line received over 5,000 calls and requests for information. Calls can last up to 90 minutes and parents can call as often as needed.